

of 5,000 aircraft (Document HI.43) of the Red Army air forces, he had to correct his figures to 12,000–14,000 aircraft (Document III.66) as early as August 1940. While in Kinzel's opinion the concentration of the Russian large units in the 300-km border area suggested both offensive and defensive intentions, the deployment of the air forces, as Kesselring noted, had an absolutely offensive character. "The air-ground organization established in the space near the border and its occupancy, on the other hand, had a decidedly offensive character; it thus also unmasked Russian intentions." 5 With regard to the concentration of the Red Army's air forces in the area close to the border, the location of the newly built airfields (often grass fields) and their sometimes excessive occupation with aircraft in the spring and early summer of 1941, the photos of aerial reconnaissance formed the decisive basis for the destruction of the Red Army's air forces to a depth of the battle space of about 300 km in the first days of the German-Soviet war and, as a result, for the achievement of air supremacy in the initial period of the war. The accurate aerial photographs taken by Rowehl's reconnaissance forces enabled targeted air strikes by the Luftwaffe on the airfields of the Red Army air forces. Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, Chief of Air Fleet 2, assessed the results of aerial reconnaissance as follows: "Thanks to tactical air planning and thanks to the untiring will of the units, it was possible, on the basis of excellent aerial reconnaissance, to achieve "air supremacy" within two days." 58 The proof was provided by the high number of airfields fought and aircraft destroyed by the Red Army Air Forces in the first days of the war. Thus, in the course of the 1st air operation (2.5 days), 2,500 aircraft were destroyed on the ground and in the air. Göring, who doubted these reports, had to find out during a check that the numbers were even higher by 200–300 destroyed airplanes. The fact that a number of urgently needed aerial photographs were still not available at the end of March 1941 is evidenced by the following reply from Fremden Heere Ost to Army Group B.

The above-mentioned shortage of aerial photographs had not been remedied even in mid-May 1941 (Document 1.19), according to a letter from the OKH concerning insufficient aerial photograph provision for the troops.

Of course, Soviet air reconnaissance noted a number of incursions into their territory in the run-up to the war. In a letter dated April 22, 1941, Colonel i. G. Krebs described these events as follows:

"Today Herr von Tippelskirch (von Tippelskirch's envoy – the author) informed me that yesterday in the Foreign Commissariat he had been given a list of 80 (!) border violations by German planes, precisely specified in detail. According to the indications given to me, some of these violations must have been quite serious. For example, a reconnaissance plane had made an emergency landing in Rovno, where maps and films had been seized that actually left no doubt about the mission." 61 The Luftwaffe's Air Intelligence Flight Reporting Service in the East Direction The flight reporting network extended over the entire German-controlled area of mainland Europe, the Mediterranean region, and the North African theater of war. In the eastward direction, the flight reporting network extended approximately to the line Riga-Bialystok- eastward Warsaw-Brest-Litovsk- upper Dniester. Eastward of this line, there was only a relatively thin flight reporting service planned and set up according to focal points. The method consisted of eye observation by means of binoculars, later with FLAK telescopes, and as well as listening service. Training was also given in aircraft recognition service. Reports were made to airborne message control centers- The extensive border violations by Red Army air forces reported by the High Command of the Wehrmacht (drawn by Jodi, Keitel, Warlimont) to the Foreign Office and the Reich Government (Document V.176) were detected by the airborne message airborne message service in addition to troop reconnaissance. Luftwaffe radio reconnaissance in the east direction

Radio reconnaissance in the east direction was also organized late. While an almost closed radio measurement field could be created along the western border by 10 May 1940, the first deployment of two Freya radio measurement units in the east, at Kranz on the Kurische Nehrung to protect Königsberg and a second one near Insterburg, did not take place until May/June 1941. While the war diary of the High Command of the Wehrmacht recorded on June 10, 1941, aerial photographs and aerial reconnaissance led to the conclusion that 4,000 Soviet aircraft were to be expected in the border military districts and another 1,000 further back, Colonel Aschenbrenner, air attaché in Moscow, reported the strength of the Russian front-line aircraft as 12,000.

In view of the large number of aircraft of the Red Army Air Forces concentrated in the border military districts, the stationing of Freya radios served air defense and thus the protection of East Prussia from the expected surprise air attacks. The radio listening service of the air intelligence unit of the Luftwaffe. An air force radio listening service was considered particularly suitable for the early reconnaissance of command posts, airfields, structures and other features of the air forces of the surrounding countries, since the danger of a surprise air attack could emanate in particular from foreign air forces. Despite early efforts by the Reich Aviation Ministry, Inspection 7 of the Reich Ministry of the Armed Forces initially prohibited any assistance. This made it difficult to establish the Luftwaffe *horch* service. Nevertheless, in the fall of 1935, an air force radio listening service was established. By the end of 1938, the listening posts Potsdam-Eiche, Insterburg, Pulsnitz/Sa., Vienna, Hirschstetten near Vienna, Breslau Kriestern and Budapest were in operation in the east/southeast direction. With the beginning of the war, the Luftwaffe listening posts were relocated, disbanded or newly established. In the interest of keeping the Wehrmacht's planned preemptive strike secret, the air fleets moved to the east very late. Thus, Luftflotte 2, together with the IIIrd Abteilung of Luftnachrichtenregiment 2 (III./LnRgt 2), was not moved to the east until May 1941, and Luftnachrichtenregiment 1 even shortly before the start of the war. Naturally, the short-notice listening services of the air intelligence regiments had no experience in intercepting the radio traffic of the Soviet air forces, so that the Warsaw listening station had to bear the main burden of observation. Reconnaissance problems also arose because Russian aircraft were poorly equipped with radios. At the beginning of the war, often only the leader of the flying unit was equipped with a transceiver and the unit's aircraft pilots with only a receiver. Nevertheless, the Luftwaffe's listening service succeeded in providing comprehensive reconnaissance of the Russian air force's advance even before the war began. By observing Soviet ground-to-ground traffic, it was possible to obtain information on the deployment of Soviet air forces, the occupancy of airfields, the supply situation, and the readiness of air forces for deployment.⁶⁵ Weiß writes about the Luftwaffe's listening service in the east: "H-Dienst in the east was the means of enemy reconnaissance. The contribution of radio reconnaissance to the overall picture of the enemy situation amounted to up to 80 %/o, according to information from higher command." Of course, here, too, there was a slow increase in the results up to this 80 %/o. ⁶⁶

Summary of the Results of Air Force Reconnaissance in the Direction East 1. The numerous findings of the High Commands of the Wehrmacht, Army, and Air Force in a large number of diaries and reconnaissance documents are sufficient proof that reconnaissance was able to procure very good information about the air threat from the east. The results of the Luftwaffe's targeted strikes on the airfields of the Red Army's air forces, the high number of aircraft destroyed on the ground in the first days of the war (statistics speak of 2,500 aircraft), and the Luftwaffe's air supremacy thus achieved in the initial period of the war, the 1st air operation, prove the accuracy of the reconnaissance of Rowehl's reconnaissance air forces as well as of the other reconnaissance types, especially the air

intelligence service. 2 Although general reconnaissance established the westward march of the Red Army air forces early in the early summer of 1940, concentrated photo reconnaissance of the USSR border military districts did not begin until after Hitler had given the go-ahead and, as a result of his personal assignment to Rowehl, not until Oct./Nov. 1940 at the earliest, with the task of completing it by May 15, 1941. 3 Nevertheless, Goering's developed sense of department, a pronounced elitism in the Luftwaffe, reporting channels that were not precisely defined, and a lack of centralized command of reconnaissance in the eastern direction under the responsibility of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht in the run-up to the German-Russian War sometimes impeded the complete forwarding of photo reconnaissance results to the Foreign Armies East as well. The radio observation service of the Kriegsmarine The German naval radio reconnaissance observed the radio of the naval fleet of the USSR, as well as of many other fleets, already since the middle of the thirties, as far as the radio reception conditions from Germany allowed this. Due to the concentration of the German navy on the naval war against England, a targeted surveillance of the radio traffic of the Russian naval fleet in the Baltic Sea and in the Black Sea, depending on the technical possibilities, only started with the beginning of the German-Russian war. Since the key procedure used in Germany differed only slightly from the Russian naval key, it was possible to read much of their content. Here, too, the close cooperation with Finnish radio reconnaissance had a particularly positive effect. 67 Thus, the German fleet received the information about the transfer of the naval fleet of the USSR to combat readiness on 11 June 1941 as well as the issuance of further tasks to the naval fleet (e.g., to ships at sea) from the Finnish reconnaissance organs. (Cf. Schwipper, Bernd: Deutschland im Visier Stalins, p. 337.). The secret military intelligence service/the Amt Ausland/Abwehr in the East The German intelligence service, as far as such a collective term can be used at all, consisted of the Amt Ausland/Abwehr, the foreign armies/air forces/navies departments of the Wehrmacht sections and the political intelligence service of the Reich Security Main Office. There was no centralized management of the various organs. The "German Military Defense," initially the defense department of the Reich War Ministry, led by Canans from 1935 onward, was renamed the Foreign Intelligence and Defense Office Group when the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht was established in 1938, and in 1941 it became the Ausland/Abwehr Office. 69

The Amt Ausland/Abwehr was directly subordinate to the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht, as shown in the following document 1.21, and was subdivided into the departments Ausland and Abwehr I-III. 70

Intelligence gathering on the armed forces of countries that could be considered as potential enemies of Germany, as well as their possible intentions directed against the Reich, was the exclusive responsibility of Abwehr Division I of the Ausland/Abwehr Office, while Division II was responsible for acts of sabotage and subversion and Division III for actual counterintelligence, including counterespionage. Units were created in each case for reconnaissance of the strength and equipment of the armies, the air forces, the navies, and the armaments industries. Document L22 shows the structure using Abwehrrabteilung I as an example. The primary objective of reconnaissance activities was to determine preparatory measures in the event of a possible mobilization and operational plans in the event of war. 72 The Office's War Organizations Since it was to be assumed that all relations would be broken off in the event of a war, the Office for Foreign Affairs/Defense created bases of the Office in neutral or friendly countries, disguised as economic enterprises, so-called war organizations of the Office. Such war organizations were established in Great Britain, Spain, Portugal, the Mediterranean region, North Africa, Switzerland, Turkey, Bulgaria and the Japanese-occupied part of China, among others, but with

particular emphasis in North and South America. Although all of the known 47 war organizations had the mission of general reconnaissance, each was also given specific tasks. However, according to Weiße, only the Finland Control Organization was given the task of reconnaissance of Soviet forces.⁷³

The evaluation of the information obtained by the Amt Ausland/Abwehr, as well as the results of radio reconnaissance and other various sources, was carried out by the Abteilung Fremde Heere (Foreign Armies Department) in the Army High Command and by the Abteilung Fremde Luftwaffen (Foreign Air Forces Department) and Abteilung Fremde Marinen (Foreign Navies Department) in the other branches of the Wehrmacht. The Ic departments in the higher staffs usually also included an Abwehr officer.⁷⁴ In the years after 1933, military reconnaissance activities in the east focused primarily on Poland and Czechoslovakia. For example, after the occupation of the demilitarized Rhineland on March 7, 1936, the Abwehr unit for East Prussia determined that a wartime mood prevailed in Poland and that preparations were being quietly made to accelerate mobilization if necessary.⁷⁵ Although the USSR did not go unnoticed, however, reconnaissance of the Red Army was by no means a focal point of the office's activities from the outset, since good cooperation had developed between the USSR and Germany in the military field and the USSR was not a bordering state of Germany anyway. Through this cooperation, German officers were essentially well informed about the structure, equipment and strength of the land and air forces of the peacetime state of the Red Army. Naturally, this knowledge and experience was evaluated by the Abwehr and, in the Army General Staff, by the Fremden Heere Ost. With the Soviet Union's entry into the German-Polish war on 17 September 1939 and the conclusion of the German-Soviet Border and Friendship Treaty of 29 September 1939, a direct line of contact with the USSR had been established, which prompted Canaris to consider the reconnaissance of military operations behind the new border a matter of urgency. After the conclusion of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty (the Hitler-Stalin Pact) of August 23, 1939, however, Hitler had forbidden the Abwehr to have any connection with, for example, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and also prohibited its financial support.⁷⁶ How right Canaris was is demonstrated by the immediately following war against Finland, begun on 30 November 1939, and the further local campaigns against the Baltic states (15–17 June 1940), Bessarabia and northern Bukovina (28 June 1940), and the planning of an East Prussian campaign (draft operational plan of 19 August 1940). Abwehrdienststellen were established in Radom, Ciechanow, Lublin, Terespol, Kraków, Suwalki, and other places. However, the organization of reconnaissance against the Soviet Union proved to be extremely problematic. Although a larger potential of fugitives from Western Ukraine and Western Belarus, from the Baltic States and Bessarabia was available, and many also agreed to return and conduct reconnaissance/espionage after being recruited by the Abwehr, this undertaking proved to be extremely difficult.

Oskar Reile, a colonel in the Abwehr, commented on this as follows: "In order to prevent misunderstandings, it should be emphasized that cooperation with Ukrainian and other emigrants was not taken up because a war was being planned on the part of Germany, but rather because the leading figures in the Military Abwehr feared an attack by countries opposed to the war."⁷⁷ However, many results obtained by the Abwehr, often through emigrants, including many Ukrainian, were falsifications or news hoaxes and thus meaningless. High vigilance of the border troops of the USSR Ministry of the Interior, fear of reprisals by the Stalinist regime, the creation of cordons along the new demarcation line between the USSR and East Prussia as well as the Generalgouvernement up to the creation of a "dead zone" in the area near the border, combined with the evacuation of the population and the demolition of their houses, made the penetration of Russian territory and thus the work of Abwehr Division I in

this direction immensely difficult. The created "dead zone" along the border with East Prussia and the Generalgouvernement was already reported in Situation Report No. 3 of the Fremden Heere Ost (Document V27) of April 28, 1941: "(6.) A zone at least 800 meters wide (in some cases 10 km zone reported) seems to have been cleared of civilians along the entire border during the period April 1 - April 15." Thus, it was immensely more difficult to cover the Soviet Union with a network of "confidence lanes" as was still possible in the West. But, since it had been neglected to build up a dense intelligence network due to the hitherto more partner-like relationship with the Soviet Union, it was hardly possible to catch up. Every intelligence service must plan ahead. It needs so-called perspective agents." 78 But these hardly existed. Even the attempts made in 1939/1940 to infiltrate Abwehr agents into the Kommandos for organizing the resettlement of ethnic Germans from the territories occupied by the Red Army hardly showed any results. Thus, the Abwehr succeeded in infiltrating 14-16 Abwehr men into the 300-man resettlement command of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (resettlement of 135,000 Volksdeutsche from eastern Poland/Narowgebiet, Volhynia and Galicia), who were able to reconnoiter behind the Russian lines in accordance with their mission, even though two were immediately expelled by the Russian authorities. 79

Despite all the Abwehr's efforts to obtain reliable intelligence on military operations in the western border military districts, it proved very difficult to gain an intelligence foothold in the Soviet Union. That there was, nevertheless, a number of valuable pieces of information from the Abwehr organizations for the army groups in the East is evidenced by a number of documents. For example, as Document III.1 13 shows, an Abwehr office reported the clarified location of an airfield belonging to the Red Army Air Forces.⁸⁰ Since commandos and squads set up by the Ausland/Abwehr office had already achieved valuable reconnaissance results in the area near the front in the campaigns against Poland and France, the Army General Staff issued an order (known as the "Haider order") on the setting up of Abwehr commandos and squads, later referred to as frontline reconnaissance troops.⁸¹ The Balkan campaign had not yet ended (i.e., about the last decade of April 1941) when the Abwehr's Front Reconnaissance Command, operating in the Yugoslavian area, received orders from the Ausland/Abwehr office to return to Vienna with the subordinate units as soon as possible and to prepare for Operation Barbarossa. "From the occupied territories, from France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway, as well as from the homeland, people were hastily recruited who appeared to be suitable for use in front-line reconnaissance units." ⁸² The Ausland/Abwehr office, Canaris, and the chief of Abwehrabteilung I, Colonel Piekenbrock, proceeded with the formation of the military units in great haste, as ordered. During the first weeks of June 1941, the Front Reconnaissance Commands were deployed to the three Army Groups North, Central and South and placed under the command of the Army Staffs for service and operations. They moved into their initial positions in the course of 21 June 1941 and advanced together with the tanks, advance units, and assault engineers at the beginning of the war. ⁸³ The flow of intelligence from the Soviet Union was very sparse in view of the hermetic sealing off of the country. Despite the greatest difficulties, since no intelligence network had been established in the USSR in the long term, the Abwehr repeatedly obtained useful partial results that could be assembled into an overall mosaic in the Foreign Armies East Division. For example, Kinzel was able to report to the General Staff on 11 October 1940 the procurement of the Red Army's original order for the conduct of the Bessarabian campaign. ⁸⁴

Summary of the Results of the Abwehr Despite some partial successes in reconnaissance of the Red Army's advance, the Abwehr fell more and more into the shadows in preparation for the German-Russian War and in the course of the war and finally lost more and more importance in view of the

more intelligent types of reconnaissance that were emerging in the course of technical development. By Schramm, conventional espionage was called "old-style espionage" as "...increasingly failing .fo/owzz.ge" and degenerated into irrelevance in the course of the war. 8 Intelligence offered far more opportunities also for radio deception and radio games with the enemy, as the diverse literature and the documentary evidence in the following chapters demonstrate. Of course, not everything has become known about the results of counterintelligence in the pre-war period of the German-Russian war either. Obviously, the obligation of silence imposed on the agents applies for life. Reconnaissance by the diplomatic service of the Foreign Office and the military attaches of the German Reich in the Soviet Union in the years 1940/1941 The reports of the diplomatic service of the Foreign Office The leadership of the German Reich received essential reports about the foreign policy and military plans and intentions of the Allies from the staff of the German embassies, but also from embassies of friendly countries (e.g.: Finland, Japan), partly also by intercepted reports, and so on. If one follows the White Papers of the Foreign Office, one gets the impression that reports about the involvement of the Soviet Union with the goal of encircling Germany were received primarily through the embassies of the German Reich in London and Paris.⁸⁶ Excerpts from some of this information are included in II and further chapters. The Reconnaissance Reports of the Military Attaches in the Soviet Union There is no doubt that the military attaches (army, air force, and navy attaches) in the embassies of all countries served not only to exchange opinions and information or to maintain contacts with the military of the host country but also to contribute to the reconnaissance of the military potentials of these countries. The fact that General Ernst Köstring, Germany's military attaché in the Soviet Union during the decisive pre-war years, understood this task in this way is expressed in his letter of 21. September 1940 to Mr. von Toppelskirch about his intended trip to Germany under "Zurück- lose justification" (quote L24).

Quote L24 "3.) Tomorrow at daylight I want to start my journey to Germany by motor car. It is one of the very few opportunities to make a trip through the interior under harmless justification. I asked to be allowed to take the shortest route via Minsk-Warsaw. From the R.A. (Red Army - the author) I was allowed 3 crossings over the Lithuanian (!) border. That was 4 days ago. Since then the Embassy and I have been fighting with all means that the passport be visé - not to be achieved. "⁸⁷ One can therefore assume that he wanted to use this trip to get an overview of the concentration of the Red Army against East Prussia in this area, which took place in July/August 1940 and could not have remained hidden from him. If one follows his further letters of October 10, 17 and 31, 1940, there is hardly any mention of reconnaissance results. As early as 1938, shortly before the so-called Czech crisis, Ambassador Count Schulenburg from Berlin received an inquiry as to whether the Russians might attack Germany. The short report of the military attaché Köstring read something like: "The Russians are very well able to attack, especially with their air force. But whether he would attack, I would have to leave to the judgment of political authorities. " 8 Although the military attaché confirmed the readiness of the Red Army for war, as shown in the following quotation 1.25 from a memorandum of Köstring, he rejected any intention of the Soviet leadership to start a war in the near future. Quote L25 "2. ...I have taken the position that the R.A., thanks to its strength and material equipment, is naturally in a position to wage war at any time, on the other hand, the Soviet state leadership will reasonably find it difficult to do so in the foreseeable future without a compelling reason, since a.. the perfection of the army in tactical terms as well as in further perfection of its equipment requires several years (at least 2 to 3) of undisturbed peacetime work; b. the economic development and consolidation of the internal situation of the S. U. must make a peacetime period of 1 or more decades appear very desirable to it. "⁸⁹ There is no doubt that military attaché Köstring supplied Germany with a number of valuable infor- mations about the

Red Army, about structures, armament and equipment, maneuvers carried out, military and military-political events or developments. A comparison of some of the reconnaissance results reported by Köstring with their presentation in the reconnaissance information of the Foreign Armies East in the following Table L26 shows a correspondence of this information. Examination of some reports for origin and truthfulness

Some quite interesting excerpts from Köstring's messages or correspondence about the development of the situation or about signs of a Red Army advance will be examined in the following and compared with the real development.

May 21, 1941: Letter from military attaché Köstring to General Matzky: "The opinion of a good connoisseur of local conditions cannot be dismissed out of hand that Stalin, without whose consent nothing has happened so far, has appointed himself head of government because he was interested in improving relations with us through his person, which Molotov, in his petty way, did not succeed in

doing. After all, my source argues, Stalin is the one who has personally boosted relations with us. "108 A self-deception? Let us look at the measures ordered by Stalin in the run-up to this assessment: O 09 May 1941 - TASS denial of the report on the transfer of the Femost units to the West; O 13 May 1941 - issuance of directives on the beginning of the deployment of units from the inner military districts to the West; O 11-13 May 1941 - advance deployment of units closer to the border; O 15 May 1941 - revision of the existing operational plan. Thus, the truth of Stalin's actions, evidenced by Russian documents, looked different. Was this not known to the military at- tache?109

"That Russia does not expect its own entry into the war can probably also be concluded from the frankness with which the Air Industry -Commission Tschersich gets to see everything. If Russia considered its own war inevitable or even headed for it, this insight would hardly be granted. "But if Russia were so clearly heading for war, it would have to show itself here somehow. "No one believes in Russia's will to go to war, but on the other hand, my opinion that Russia will try to make trouble for us everywhere is not shared everywhere. "In summary, I can only say that, according to all the news available to me, calm prevails throughout the country, that there is no sign of any preparations for war on a large scale.... "110 (2) Except for a few trains, 3 to 4, some of them loaded with the usual light trucks, there were no measures to be observed that could be called mobilization. Absolute silence apparently at the upper Russian authorities. Chatter about a war among the people. Cityscape, pres- se, mood show nothing conspicuous. "111 "I also agree completely with Krebs that no offensive intentions of the S. U. can be discerned. "11 "Since offensive action by the S. U. appears to be ruled out in the foreseeable future," 113

Although the military attaché, as a number of his reports prove, must himself have gradually come to the conclusion, upon thorough analysis of his own findings or those reported to him, that the Red Army was being readied for an offensive into Germany, he repeatedly reports his conviction to Germany that "no offensive intentions on the part of the S. U. can be ascertained. "As the author's commentary on Köstring's reports, based on comparisons with accessible documents or current research results, proves, these reports were in part superficial, lacked depth, and were often contradictory, i.e., hardly helpful for a decision for a pre- ventive war. Hitler did not believe the military attaches anyway. He said to von Ribbentrop, " ... that diplomats and military attaches are the most well-informed people in the world."™ And von Ribbentrop

further stated in the cross-examination at Nuremberg: Quote 1.29 " I was very skeptical whether these reports (of the diplomats and attaches - the author) were accurate, because the Führer, where all the intelligence services met, had news of a completely different nature, and the political attitude also pointed in a different direction. " 115 The Foreign Commands of German Officers of the Army Attache Group in 1938 The fact that the Army took advantage of a variety of possibilities for the deployment of German officers in foreign countries in order to obtain information about the foreign armies legally is demonstrated by the following deployment report of the Attache Group in the Army High Command of 22 February 1939 on the deployments in 1938. As evidenced by the list of operations attached as an appendix, Red Army reconnaissance played no part.

Document 1.30

To

Summary of Reconnaissance Results of the Diplomatic Services and Military Attaches in the Soviet

Union 1. Diplomatic Services The Diplomatic Services provided the Foreign Office with essential information about the diplomatic intrigues directed against Germany and the policy of encirclement of Germany by the Allies, especially by England. Their special importance is made clear by early reports made even before the start of the war. The political leadership of the German Reich was informed about the goals of the Allies. Some excerpts from these reports, especially from the White Papers of the Foreign Office, are given in Chapter II and the overall connection to the subsequent war actions of the Wehrmacht is made clear. The assessment is based on Köstring's memoirs from his life, 21 accessible official reports to the War Ministry, the General Staff of the Army and the Foreign Office (September 1935 to May 1936) as well as 62 letters from private correspondence with Oberquartiermeister IV in the General Staff of the Army (July 1937 to June 1941). Unfortunately, Köstring's public memoirs end with the Polish campaign and also his official reports with the year 1936. It can be assumed that a selection was made here. Also the content of the oral reports to the Foreign Office or to the High Command of the Wehrmacht or the Army, which Köstring mentioned, is not known. With all understanding that in this pre-war situation explosive military secrets could hardly be transmitted by written messages, letters etc., especially since the cipher system used by him was considered outdated, a number of contradictory assessments become visible in the common messages of Köstring and Krebs. 3. Although a whole series of reports contained details that could have given the enemy situation analysts in the High Command of the Army/Foreign Armies East important indications (e.g. the discovery of transports of young recruits in the direction of Bialystok, the concentration of 200 divisions on the German eastern border, etc.), one searches in vain for reports that drew attention to a serious development threatening danger in the east. Nevertheless, Köstring repeatedly emphasized the readiness of the Soviet Union for war and that the "Aesse" was very well capable of attacking, especially with its air forces, despite the fact that a number of problems of the Red Army had been identified (e.g. the shooting of many responsible officers). On the other hand, he firmly rejected a will to war on the part of the Soviet Union and the intention of offensive action (citations 1.28). A comparison of the reports of the German military attaché in Moscow with the information about the Red Army contained in the reconnaissance information and the situation reports of the Foreign Armies East (IIL to VI chapters) shows, however, that except for the reproduction of some details (cf. Table 1.27) such explosive information about the already existing war army, the implementation of a partial mobilization, the beginning of the deployment or the location of the airfields in the border military districts as well as their occupancy, etc. is completely missing.

(5) Certainly also those reports of the military attaché are significant which came from publicly accessible sources, which were obtained by the attaché during visits, exercises etc. organized by the Soviet side with deliberation (sometimes probably also with deceit). 6. according to the available documents, there are no documents that can be found in the handbooks 11' of the Stranger Armies East about the Red Army. According to the available documents it remains to be stated that the protection of secrets had a high priority in the Red Army, the Soviet officers were masters in camouflage and deception and only the absolutely necessary was shown or revealed during demonstrations and maneuvers of small structures. Thus, the military attaché did not provide any information about the creation of the mechanized corps, about the new T-34 and KW tanks and other modern weapon systems, which would certainly not have been legally obtainable. Göring's Secret Research Office 118 The Research Office of the Reich Air Ministry, created by Hermann Göring on April 10, 1933, intercepted cables, telephone lines and radio waves that crisscrossed Europe. Divided into 5 research offices (telephone, radio, broadcasting, telex and telegram monitoring), the overland lines between Vienna, Prague, Paris, Moscow and London, such as the so-called "Indo cable" (from England to India), the overseas cable from Paris to Tallinn and Helsinki, were tapped, foreign radio programs and letter

monitoring were carried out. At the end of the development, the Research Office had 5,000 reliable employees working under the strictest security regulations. There was not a single case of a Research Office employee spying for a foreign power. Every month, the Research Office deciphered 2,400 radio messages, analyzed 42,000 unencrypted radio and wire messages, compiled 1,400 reports with the results of telephone surveillance, intercepted 1,100 radio broadcasts and analyzed 150 newspapers. Close cooperation developed with von Ribbentrop. Since the staff of the Research Office succeeded in destroying almost all documents in the last days of the war, only the document contained in David Irving's book "Göring's Secret Service" has become known to this day. Goering confirmed this fact in the Nuremberg cross-examination.

Quote 1.31 . "The reports that interested the Foreign Office were given to the Foreign Office, the reports that were important to the Führer were given to the Führer, those that were important to the military side were given to the War Ministry, the Aviation Ministry or the Economic Ministry. "119 With the beginning of the war, the Research Office also took over military tasks. Thus, the Research Office was able to realistically assess the military strength of the Soviet Union before the war began. The head of Department V of the Research Office, Walter Seifert, told interrogators of the Army Security Agency of the U.S. Army: "Our greatest success concerned internal Russian traffic, which enabled us to explore bottlenecks in the Russian supply system. " Information was thus available on top-secret measures taken by the Soviet Union, which reached Goering but also Hitler.¹²⁰ The Foreign Office also had 1. von Ribbentrop a small information service as the Secret Reporting Service Abroad. ¹²¹ Information by the Intelligence Services of Allied Countries A few examples may be documented: □ Information from the Japanese General Staff or the Military Attache in Japan Keitel stated in his interrogation by Soviet officers on June 17, 1945: "Military talks with Japan were not held. True, we received constant information from the Japanese General Staff on the condition of the Far East Army (the Red Army - the author). "122 D Information from Finnish reconnaissance, including the report of the Finnish listening service of 13 June 1941 on the instruction of the Commissar of the Naval Fleet on the establishment of combat readiness of the Soviet naval fleet, as mentioned above. 3 O Reports from the Romanian reconnaissance services on the stationing and strength of Red Army units in Bessarabia and northern Bukovina. In the course of the following chapters, many documents will be considered in detail.

Conclusions from Chapter I; the Organization of Reconnaissance in the East 1. The Soviet Union Impeded Any Normal Military Reconnaissance Effective in Other States The new social system being built in the Soviet Union facilitated the imposition of strict secrecy on all areas requiring protection, but especially on the Red Army. The self-image of the Red Army as an army of a new type, whose social concern was to shield itself from the surrounding capitalist armies, above all the increasing assessment of a number of capitalist states, especially Germany and Italy, as fascist dictatorships, created the justification for this strict secrecy. The strict orders of the Red Army known to us today, such as the advance of the Mechanized Corps under absolute radio silence, the conduct of marches only at night, the camouflage of marches as troop exercises and of partial mobilizations as "large-scale training exercises", the restriction of the participation of diplomatic observers in exercises, etc., made the reconnaissance of the Red Army immensely difficult. Stalin's repressions, starting from the top and working down to the smallest structures, spread a psychosis of fear of being considered a German spy in view of Stalin's purges against the military. Ingrained mistrust and a pronounced addiction to secrecy, which was a concern of society as a whole, made the reconnaissance of the Red Army's march immensely difficult. The controlled synchronization of the media made it impossible to report on all

military events and developments in a way that was divergent or damaging to society, so that only official announcements

found their way into the press and the agency's reconnaissance was hardly able to provide any new information, let alone about the Red Army, or at least made it virtually impossible. Thus, Keitel commented before the International Court of Nuremberg on little material that could be made available to the Army: Quote 1.32 "... because of the strong closure of the Russian area against German findings. "

2. the conduct of reconnaissance from the German side There was undoubtedly a long-term effect of the formerly good cooperation with the USSR in the military field, such as the lack of long-term development of a intelligence network. However, the main reason for the late start of effective reconnaissance was, despite the ideological mistrust, the political consideration of the USSR as a contractual partner and the hope, favored by Ribben- trop, to win Stalin for the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis. Thus, there was no political will to start the reconnaissance in the eastern direction early and to be very active, since Hitler seemed willing to keep the pact with the USSR at that time. Proof of this is Hitler's general ban on espionage or reconnaissance, including aerial reconnaissance, in the Soviet Union after the conclusion of the treaties of August and September 1939 with the Soviet Union. This ban was lifted only in late autumn 1940. According to the documents, targeted aerial reconnaissance of the Soviet Union's border regions did not begin until the second half of winter 1940/1941, interrupted by their use in the Balkan campaign of 1941. Naval radio surveillance toward the Soviet Union also did not begin until the war began. Further examples are Hider's prohibition to the Abwehr to establish connections with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and to support them financially, or the ordered limitation of the radio operators' listening activities, using the example of an intelligence reconnaissance platoon of the Wehrmacht in the East, and so on. With the following quotation from the minutes of the witness interrogation of General Field Marshal Paulus before the Military Tribunal in Nuremberg, certainly meant differently by him, the existing ban on reconnaissance in the East was confirmed. Quote 1.33 (excerpt) "But not only for operational, but also for tactical surprise, all measures had been taken; for example, the prohibition of visible reconnaissance on and over the border before the war began. " 125 Undoubtedly, there were also objective reasons for the only moderate reconnaissance in the direction of the East due to the use of reconnaissance organs in the Western campaign, the continuing air and naval war against England, the Balkan campaign to prevent the opening of a southern front, and at other hot spots. Kinzel was also deployed in France during the French campaign and not in the east to reconnoiter the Soviet Union. Thus, Halder formulated in the Kriegsta- gebuch under May 21, 1940: "17.00 h Kinzel kommt vom AOK 6." 126

It should also be remembered that it was only as a result of the German-Polish-Russian War that the buffer state of Poland fell away, the Soviet Union became a riparian state of Germany, and thus the reconnaissance of the Red Army became more necessary. However, there were also a number of structural problems for the organization of effective reconnaissance of the Red Army's actions. An overarching departmental egoism prevented a cen- tral leadership of reconnaissance in the direction of the East in the prewar period. The interaction of the various services involved in intelligence gathering in the east was not regulated on a uniform basis until mid-1944. Some of the reconnaissance information handed over to the troops was outdated or incorrect, as Heydorn reported on a training session on Russian radio for the platoon leaders of the close-in reconnaissance platoons in May 1941. Operating documents for Russian radio operations, basic codes for Russian keys, information on Russian radios, and also on wartime divisions of Russian rifle divisions from 1935 and mechanized brigades from 1936 were handed over, which still dated from the Russian-Finnish War. 127 As demonstrated in Chapter V,

much of the information required for planning in the troops was taken from old maps and atlases, since current reconnaissance results were not available. Summarizing this complex, it can be stated: Reconnaissance in the eastern direction began late, more spontaneously, only in recognition of a threat posed by Stalin's policy and the deployment of the Red Army. A long-term planned and organized reconnaissance, as is claimed by the established historiography, is not recognizable. 3. 3. the existence of sufficient reconnaissance information for considerations of a preemptive strike against the Red Army Despite the above-mentioned serious deficiencies and problems, Germany's political and military leadership possessed reliable information about the possible development of a threat of danger in the East, as will be demonstrated in the following chapters. One has to reject the argumentation of the established historiography that the claim of a pre-emptive strike of the Wehrmacht, which has existed for years, is only based on Stalin's speech of May 5, 1941 and the deployment of the Red Army, which did not exist at all. Proof are the available reconnaissance information and situation reports of the Foreign Armies East, the detailed daily reports of the commander of the listening troops, the alarming reports of the commander of the fog troops, reports of the Foreign Air Forces East, which proved the danger of the air forces of the Red Army deployed in offensive grouping, the information from abroad/defense and from cooperating reconnaissance organs of Finland, Romania and Japan, which resulted in an exact enemy situation picture. Not to be overlooked were the early reports from domestic and foreign diplomatic circles that gave indications of the planned encirclement of Germany and the involvement of the Soviet Union, as well as the reports of Goering's Research Office presented to Hitler. In this respect, the decision to pre-empt the Red Army attack can be traced to a mosaic overall picture.

The reconnaissance was not as bad as often claimed and also in the literature, but started only after the threatening development in the East became known. Let us take this as an indication that Stalin, the USSR, the Red Army acted, the German reconnaissance, the Wehrmacht reacted. There is no question of a long-term intention of Germany to attack or of a plan/step-by-step plan.